

3. "The beard of the prawns."
4. "The claws of the prawns that live in the river."
5. "The musical instruments made with a comb used in the head-waters of the Mugang."
6. "The insect *munyun* blows on the leaves."
- 7 & 8. These lines are in the old language. The Dayaks themselves do not know the meaning.
9. "Shaking *sanyan*, shaking only."
10. "The place of the dragon, the place of the python."
11. "The place of the cobra."
12. "The large circle made of them can be seen."
- 13, 14, 15, 16. "Before they were only in love ;
"Now they are married to one another."

W. R. BARRY GIFFORD.

"Ulid Puoad" and "Pasang Salang"; Customs observed
at Death among the Bisayas of Sarawak.

The following notes were collected on some recent visits up the Limbang River, Northern Sarawak:—

"ULID PUOAD."

The corpse is laid on a bier resting on six gongs, which in turn rest on another bier supported by four cannon lying on the ground.

The feet of the corpse must point towards the West, as the Bisayas believe that the souls of the dead abide in the place where the sun sets; they point the feet of the dead in that direction so that the soul, on leaving the body, shall have a straight road to travel on; the body is also buried in this position.*

The husband of the dead woman (or *vice versa*) may not leave the house for forty † days, *i. e.* may not sleep in any other house; this, however, is mitigated slightly in this way:—

"For fourteen † days the mourner may not leave the

* [Compare the Christian custom of burying the dead in the opposite direction, so that on rising they may face the East, where, from a westerner's point of view, Christ appeared. Like many other customs in the Christian religion, it has been borrowed, probably, from older Pagan ideas and adopted to suit the requirements of the newer religion. As a relic of sun-worship we may remember that Christ is called "the Sun of Righteousness."—Ed.]

† I am informed that the number of days has no particular significance nowadays; it is simply the old custom.

house or bathe on any account whatsoever, but after the feast, which is held on the fourteenth day, he may go out of the house by a ladder, which is specially made for this purpose. The ladder is then destroyed, and he returns to the house by the public way. Nobody else may use the special ladder." During the rest of the mourning, he may go to work, &c., but may not sleep in another house.

The mourner is always dressed in white during the forty days. It is only the very rich people and those of great importance in the land who may use black for mourning.

At the time of death, guns are fired and gongs beaten; this occurs at stated intervals throughout the day. The corpse is buried the day after death, with the cannon (*bedil*) and gongs on which it has rested.

The body is put into a box of hard wood (*bilian*), which has a pointed roof on the lid, and under the roof are put the *bedils*, &c., gold, silver, and money. This property is all buried and may not be exhumed. The coffin has a post at each corner which holds it together and prevents the roof from slipping off. Any other relations dying afterwards are buried in the same coffin, which is opened for that purpose. As many as twenty people are buried in one coffin.

Another custom is that the corpse is put into a coffin of soft wood (*plai*), which is kept in the house, against the wall, covered up with gongs, and resting on *bedils*. After one year the coffin is opened and the bones transferred to another coffin of hard wood (*bilian*), which is then buried. They also hold a big feast for this ceremony which is known as "Mentulang." A death is the signal for a great feast, at which much "Pengasi" (native spirit made of rice, paddy, sugar-cane, and wood-ash) is drunk, and many buffaloes killed. This feast lasts for two or three days. Another is held after fourteen days, and another and final one after forty days.

"PASANG SALANG."

After the corpse has been disposed of, a big flare is lighted in the living-room (*bilek*) that night. The fire is made of "Upeh Pinang" (the outer cover of the skin which protects the young betel-nut) which contains powdered Damar, and is about a foot and a half long. This "candle" is called "Salang." The *salang* is placed erect on a pile of *bedils* and gongs, and is lighted at sundown and extinguished at dawn every day during the forty days. The people take it in turns to watch this fire, so as to save accidents. If,

during the forty days of mourning, a boat with awnings goes up river the mourners have a right to call to the boat and ask for alms (*minta sedika*). If the people in the boat do not comply, they can be fined a "Gangsa" or some other brass utensil. Also, if a person strikes a gong (other than those used for mourning) near the house, on land or on the river, he can be fined. Boats going down river are not required to give alms. The old people say that at night when the *salang* is burning, if the flame burns low, it is a sign that a boat is passing the house with a fowl on board. They then have to call the boat and take some of the fowl's feathers to rekindle the flame. If they neglect to do this, the candle will go out, which signifies bad luck. The above custom refers to married people only.

The Bisayas believe in a future state, which takes the form of a life similar to this, but under more beneficial terms. They think that the land to which they will go will be richer and more fertile than their present abode, and that there they will meet all those who have gone before. They also believe that there is a wonderful tree growing there which has every kind of fruit growing on it, and a branch for each kind; also that as fast as the fruit falls more fruit springs out of its branches.

P. C. B. NEWINGTON.

Note on a Penggang "Melegong."

This plate originally belonged to a Treng woman who was captured by a Mitting man in a raid; afterwards, these tribes made peace, and the Mitting man married his captive, who was of high birth (*bangsa Rajah*). The offspring of this marriage was Aban Tassan, of Batu Blah, the last owner of the plate.

The plate is curious on account of the chips made in its rim. This chipping apparently was a well-known Treng custom, and at the death of the owner of any property such as a plate or a jar, a chip was made in the rim (or in the case of a jar an ear was knocked off), in memory of the occasion and also as deceased's share of this property. This performance could only be done by a chief or an old man who had taken a head, and it was made the occasion of a feast and typical native debauch; a present was made to the man who performed the ceremony.

The Trengs and Mittings are two of the older established